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CHIQUITO SF9

A 1756 either to the malicious arts of the one, or to the 1761 fire-arms of the other. If an Abipon die from being pierced with many wounds, or from having his bones broken, or his strength exhausted A 1756 by extreme old age, his countrymen all deny ●1754 that wounds or weakness occasioned his death, 1761 and anxiously try to discover by which of the jugglers, and for what reason he was killed. Because they have remembered some of their nation to have lived for a hundred years, they imagine that they would never die, were it not A 1821 for the jugglers and the Spaniards. What ridiculous ideas do not the Americans entertain respecting the eclipse of the sun and moon! During the time it lasts, the Abipones fill the air with horrid lamentations. They perpetually cry *tayretà!* oh! the poor little thing! grieving for the sun and moon: for when these planets are obscured, they always fear that they are entirely extinguished. Still more ridiculous C 1821 are the Chiquito Indians, who say that the sun [772] and moon are cruelly torn by dogs, with which they think that the air abounds, when they see their light fail; attributing their blood red colour to the bites of these animals. Accordingly, to defend their dear planets from those aërial mastiffs, they send a shower of arrows up into the sky, amid loud vociferations,

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the common error that they should never die at all were the Spaniards and the jugglers banished from America; for, to the arms of the former, and to the arts of the latter, they attribute the deaths of all their countrymen. A wound inflicted with a spear often gapes so wide that it affords ample room for life to go out and death to come in; yet if the man dies of the wound, they madly believe him killed, not by a weapon, but by the deadly arts of the jugglers. The relations leave no stone unturned, not only diligently to investigate, but severely to punish the authors of the death, and of the sorcery. They are persuaded that the juggler will be banished from amongst the living, and made to atone for their relation's death, if the heart and tongue be pulled out of the dead man's body immediately after his decease, roasted at the fire, and given to dogs to devour. Though so many hearts and tongues are devoured, and they never observe any of the jugglers die, yet they still religiously adhere to the custom of their ancestors, by cutting out the hearts and tongues of infants and adults of both sexes, as soon as they have expired. How firmly this mad notion, that men are killed by magical arts alone, is rooted in the minds of the Abipones, you may learn from the following facts, of which I myself was a spectator. In the

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683 colony of St. Ferdinand, a Yaucaniga, famed
761 amongst his countrymen both for high birth
and military prowess, and on that very ac-
754 count ready for any audacious action, was
much afflicted at the untimely death of his
little daughter. He knew that she had been
weak and diseased from her birth, yet was
fully bent upon finding out the magical au-
thor of her death. A foreign Indian woman
married to an Abipon appeared to him, from the
representations of certain old women, who
bore her a grudge, to be the perpetrator of the
crime. Infuriated by the supposed injury, and
the desire of vengeance, he fell upon the inno-
cent unsuspecting woman at the approach of
night, as she was spinning at the fire; he
pierced her shoulder-blade with a spear with such
force, that the point came out in the middle of
her bosom, and stained the child she was suck-
ling with its mother's blood. The woman was
middle-aged, very fat, and full-breasted. She
swam in her own blood, which spouted from
every vein. The horrid nature of the wound
[757] threatening certain death, the heads of our holy
religion, which she had formerly learnt, were
briefly recalled to her memory; she received
baptism, and was admonished to forgive her
murderer. Having thus attended to the sal-
752 vation of the poor woman's soul, we applied
all our thoughts towards retarding her death,

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752 237 curing wounds; let them laugh, deride, doubt and despise, with my hearty good-will. I confidently oppose the experience of my own eyes, to their doubts and laughter. My arm, which was pierced with an arrow armed with five barbs, by the Natakebit savages, the nerve which directs the middle finger being injured at the same time, was happily cured in fourteen days by this remedy alone. With this fat I have cured men wounded both with arrows and spears; and with the same remedy I entirely healed an Abiponian woman whose leg had been wounded by an axe, in consequence of which, as all medicine had for some days been neglected, the foot was swelled in a dreadful manner. It would be endless to relate all the cures that have been worked with hen's fat.

754 [761] The jugglers are commonly thought to be the authors of diseases, as well as of death, and the sick Abipones imagine that they shall recover as soon as ever those persons are removed. A tragic event will render this foolish persuasion more undoubted. An Abipon of the town of St. Jeronymo, called Ychohàke, elevated by the memory of his own great deeds, and those of his brother, the Cacique Ychoalay, wasted away with a slow disease. It never entered his head to seek the cause in the noxious humours in which he abounded. To

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discover which of the jugglers it was that had afflicted him with this sickness, was his daily and nightly endeavour. On this affair he consulted some old women, who pronounced a Toba, of the name of Napakainchin, to be the cause of the disease. The sick man immediately devotes the accused to death, for the preservation, as he thought, of his own life. In the dead of the night, he came upon him unawares, as he was sleeping in his tent; he plunged the iron point of his spear into his body, pierced his left side with a powerful blow, broke two of his ribs, and clove his shoulder with a weapon. At the cries of the wounded man, people assembled, whilst the assassin escaped by flight. We were called to the assistance of the poor wretch. Seeing him bathed in blood, and pierced with three wounds, we imagined that he would expire immediately. The bystanders told us that unless we removed him into our house, the person who put him in this condition would return to dispatch him with fresh wounds. According to their advice, he was conveyed into our house. Slipping by the way out of the hands of the carriers, he fell to the ground with fresh, and imminent danger of his life; for he was very large, and of weight proportionable to such great bulk. The place where he was laid in our house, as it had

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797 neither door nor fastening, was fortified by the
683 Abipones with hides on every side, that Ychohàke might not gain access, if he came to com-
754 plete the murder. And, in fact, as the Indians foretold, in half an hour, he came furnished with a dagger to hasten the death of the dying man; but being bravely repulsed by Father Joseph Brigniel, whose companion I then was, returned without accomplishing his purpose. The wounded man was baptized, and by means of our cares and medicines, amongst which hen's fat was the principal, happily recovered in the course of a few weeks. Napakainchin's wife and children gladly imitated his example, and embraced the Christian religion. A little after, the whole family, apprehending fresh danger from the same Ychohàke, removed to the neighbouring town of St. Xavier.

683 Do not imagine the history of the sick
754 and crazy Ychohàke finished. After struggling with the disease for some months, with increased suspicions of some witchcraft being practised upon him, he took it into his head to accuse a woman, supposed to be acquainted with the black art, of his ill state of health. About mid-day, he attacked the unsuspecting female, and as he endeavoured to strike off her head, the weapon glanced aside, and cut her left cheek, which, falling to her breast with the

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ear hanging to it by a piece of skin, bathed the child at her breast with blood. The smiter was kept off by the people who crowded to the assistance of the woman. I could scarce refrain from tears at the cruel spectacle; but not having it in my power to punish the wretch who had committed the outrage, turned all my attention towards succouring the soul of the outraged. We had a negro somewhat skilled in the art of surgery; him I ordered to sew the cheek in three places to the head, the woman enduring the pricks of the needle without a groan, whilst the rest were filled with horror at the sight. The whole wound was washed with warm urine, anointed with hen's fat, and gently bound with a piece of linen dipped in a decoction of herbs. As no bandages to fasten the linen could be found, I used the girdle which I wore. The whole evening during which this passed, and the next night, the faithful Abipones watched diligently for the security of the woman that she might not sustain any further injury. For that Indian eagerly longed for her death, as the means of procuring the recovery of his own health. But the wound healing sooner than we had expected, the danger that the poor creature could not always remain concealed was removed, by her privately retreat-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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683 ing to the town of St. Ferdinand. Divine Pro-
754 vidence seems to have dictated her flight; for the Cacique Ychoalay, who was absent from the town at the time of the event, when informed by me of Ychohàke's cruelty, and re-
632 quested to restrain his brother, replied that he
683 should come immediately, not to restrain his
754 brother, but to kill that woman, whom he had long thought infamous for her magic arts, and to be feared by all. And indeed, being very firm in his resolves, he would have put his threats into execution without a doubt, had he found the woman in the town. For, in former years, when they wandered up and down the plains, he turned out of his horde all women suspected of sorcery, and pierced many of them, though perhaps perfectly innocent, with a spear, that they might never deceive any one again; being often condemned both on the score of credulity and cruelty.

797 But this bloody tragedy, at length, had a happy termination. The Indian Ychohàke ceased at length to live and to be feared, and you will be surprised to hear that one, who, in his lifetime, had been so mad in his suspicions of sorcery, grew sane in his last moments. Having received baptism, at his own desire, conscious of approaching dissolution he de-

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lighted much in the presence of the priest, whom, as he came in the early part of the night, he persuaded to repose for a while at his own house, promising to let him know when he felt his death approach. He kept his word: he calmly expired the night before Trinity Sunday, whilst the priest was suggesting every thing consolatory to the dying man, and his relations were all weeping around him. He caused us to entertain great hopes of his obtaining a happy immortality on many accounts. For, indignant at the lamentations of his weeping domestics, he said they should remember he was going to visit the great house of the Creator of all things, the high father, the greatest captain. Ever intent on appeasing the Almighty, he testified sorrow and remorse for the many murders he had committed, of Christians and others. He repeatedly desired his wife not to follow the custom of their ancestors in slaying his horses and sheep at his grave; leaving them, and all his other property, to his little daughter. All this manifests that he held his ancient superstitions in abhorrence, and had embraced Christianity with his whole soul. I have related this to show you that all the misery resulting from deaths and disorders is attributed by the Abipones to the magical

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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754 arts of the jugglers; whom, nevertheless, at
758 other times they revere as physicians and
761 saviours, of which more hereafter. Much remains to be said of diseases which ought not to be unknown to Europe.

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CHAPTER XXII.

OF A CERTAIN DISEASE PECULIAR TO THE ABIPONES.

DURING an eighteen years' acquaintance with Paraguay and its inhabitants, I discovered a disease amongst the Abipones Nakaiketergehes, entirely unknown elsewhere. This disease affects the mind more than the body, though I should think it occasioned by the bad temperature of the former. They sometimes begin to rave and storm like madmen. The credulous and superstitious crowd think them reduced to this state by the magic arts of jugglers, and call them *Loapaſaika*. These persons, agitated, as I think, by the intemperature of black bile, and filled with gloomy ideas, betray their madness chiefly at sun-set. The distracted persons suddenly leap out of their tents, run into the country on foot, and direct their course straight to the burying-place of their family. In speed they equal ostriches, and those who pursue them on the swiftest horses can hardly overtake and bring them home. Seized with fury in the night, they burn with the desire of committing slaughter somewhere; and for this purpose

1:Dobrizhoffer M-6 (ca. 1760) 1822
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he is no more. All the married women and widows of the town crowd to the mourning, attired as I have described before, and whilst they are filling the streets with confused wailings, with the rattling of gourds and beating of pans covered with stags' skins, a sudden shout is often heard announcing, that the man whom they mourn for as dead is come to life again. The joyous exclamation, he is revived, is instantly substituted for the mournful howling of the women, some of whom return home, whilst others hasten to the miserable mortal on the confines of life and death, and torment him with their dreadful yellings, till at last they deprive him of life. After his death, the first business of the bystanders is to pull out the heart and tongue of the deceased, boil them, and give them to a dog to devour, that the author of his death may soon die also. The corpse, while yet warm, is clothed according to the fashion of his country, wrapped in a hide, and bound with leathern thongs, the head being covered with a cloth, or any garment at hand. The savage Abipones will not endure the body of a dead man to remain long in the house; while yet warm, it is conveyed on ready horses to the grave. Women are appointed to go forward on swift steeds, to dig the grave, and honour the funeral with la-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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does' skins, which makes the most ridiculous noise you can conceive. To every three or four gourds one of these drums answers. But what offends the ear most is the shouting of the mourners. They modulate their voices, like singers, and make trills and quavers mingled with groans. After chaunting some mournful staves in this manner they all cease at intervals, and, changing their voices from the highest to the lowest key, suddenly utter a very shrill hissing. You would swear that a knife had been laid to their throats. By this sudden howl they signify that they are seized with rage, uttering all sorts of imprecations on the author of the death, whoever he be. Sometimes, intermitting this chaunt, they recite a few verses in a declamatory tone, in which they extol the good qualities and deeds of the deceased, and in a querulous voice endeavour to excite the compassion and vengeance of the survivors. At other times they mingle tears with their wailings, tears extorted not by grief, but by habit, or, perhaps, by exhaustion. Most of them carry about some little gift or remembrance of the deceased, as emu feathers, glass-beads, a knife, or a dagger. I will now describe their method of lamenting by night.

About evening, all the women that are invited